



PO Box 148, Edmonds, Washington, 98020

October 12, 2012

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mill Creek Regional Office
16018 Mill Creek Blvd.
Mill Creek, WA 98012-1541

Re: October 4th Open House on Fishing Rules

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our club is holding its fall outing on October 4th to fish quality lakes located in Okanogan County. I like many of our club members that fish lakes plan to attend that outing and as a result we are unable to participate in your open house on changes to fishing rules. In lieu of our participation, I would like to share with you our history and support for a new Selective Gear rules for a lake readily assessable to club members that reside in the south Snohomish-north King County region.

In the fall, 2009 club members approved a recommendation to seek a new fly fishing or selective fisheries lake in closer proximity to where our members reside. Snohomish County is home to 725,000 residents and has numerous lakes managed by WDFW. Many county residents are fly fishermen who must travel long distances to pursue their preferred activity. The only local lake designated for fly fishing was Ebey Lake, which has no legal access and the department has no ability to provide legal access.

In December 2009, a club representative met with Mr. Chad Jackson to discuss the topic of a fly fishing or selective rule lake within a more reasonable drive to our members. Mr. Jackson indicated that since Ebey Lake is unavailable he believed there to a need for a designated fly-fishing or Selective Gear lake in or near Snohomish County. Jackson provided our club representative a sheet listing lakes in the Mill Creek region together with their area, fishing season and 2009 fish stocking. He suggested using the information on this sheet in evaluating prospective lakes. Jackson cautioned that a lake already open year round fishing would be preferred by the department since the agency has desires to promote license sales through opening day (seasonal) fishing. Jackson also indicated that designation of Selective Gear rules is preferred by the department over a fly-fishing only classification.

Based on the conversation with Mr. Jackson and the information he provided, our club formed a committee to conduct field investigations of lakes with potential for Selective Gear rules. Five lakes were investigated of which four were in Snohomish County and one was in southern Skagit County. All five lakes are within 1-hour drive of where the vast majority of our members live. Two of the lakes are open on a year round basis.

After applying evaluation criteria all were found to have some degree of deficiency relative to what we seek as quality fishing waters. However, the lake with the least deficiency was Lake Sixteen. Its greatest impediment for quality designation is the presence of high populations of bass and perch. The club believes that department management strategies can be applied to reduce their impact on our club's preference for trout species. As Jackson had suggested we shared our findings with other fly-fishing interests. This resulted in petitions containing more than one hundred signatures submitted to the Commission asking for a lake managed under Selective Gear rules located in closer proximity to residents living in Snohomish County. We also met with representatives of the Evergreen Fly Club of Everett who share our support for Lake Sixteen as the best candidate to be managed under Selective Gear rules.

We understand that the department seeks higher income associated with managing lakes on a seasonal basis. However, in doing so the regional office is failing to address the needs and desires of a significant component of your customers and political supporters. We fly-fishermen are now required to drive long distances at considerable expense and consumption of fuel to enjoy our outdoor activity. The list of stocked lakes provided us by Mr. Jackson shows some 30 lakes covering 2,394 acres within the Snohomish-southern Skagit County area, none of which are now designated as fly-fishing only or under Selective Gear rules. If 42-acre Lake Sixteen were so designated, less than 2% of this total lake area would be managed specifically to provide a quality fishing experience we seek. Surely, less than 2% allocated for our activity can't be too much to ask.



William C. MacDonald
President

cc: Mr. Chad Jackson
(1550 Alder Street NW, Ephrata, WA 98823-9699)